

**New Jersey Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program Draft Plan**  
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection  
Coastal Management Office

**OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

September 2008

The Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) was established by the Department of Commerce, Justice, and State Appropriations Act of 2002. This Act directed the Secretary of Commerce to establish a Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) “for the purpose of protecting important coastal and estuarine areas that have significant conservation, recreation, ecological, historical, or aesthetic values, or that are threatened by conversion from their natural or recreational state to other uses,” giving priority to lands that can be effectively managed and protected and that have significant ecological value.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2002, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) was directed by Congress to establish guidelines that would make CELCP project selection an objective and nationally competitive process. To meet this directive, NOAA developed CELCP guidelines that were published in final form in June 2003. One of the key provisions of the guidelines is the requirement that *any state that wants to participate in this voluntary program prepare a Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Plan (CELCP Plan or Plan)*. This CELCP Plan must be submitted to NOAA for review and approval prior to the state becoming eligible to submit grant applications under the CELCP.

In order to qualify to receive funds under the national competitive Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP), a coastal state must develop and submit to NOAA for approval, a Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Plan. The CELCP Plans approved by NOAA will provide an assessment of priority conservation needs and clear guidance for nominating and selecting coastal and estuarine land conservation projects within each state.

The Coastal Management Office has prepared this DRAFT Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Plan for New Jersey. The Draft Plan is being made available for public review and comment for a period of 30 days (September 8<sup>th</sup> through October 7, 2008). At the close of the 30 day comment period the Coastal Management Office will review the comments submitted and revise the document as appropriate. A revised draft Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Plan for New Jersey will then be submitted to NOAA for review and approval.

Please submit all comments by October 7, 2008 to:

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**Or**

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